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**OMAR & THE HOWLERS ARE BACK WITH NEW
CD, *I'M GONE*, DUE OUT JUNE 19 ON
BIG GUITAR MUSIC**

**OMAR DYKES WILL CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
WITH CD RELEASE SHOW AT AUSTIN'S CONTINENTAL
CLUB ON THURSDAY, JUNE 21**

AUSTIN, TX – Seminal Austin-based roots music artist Omar Kent Dykes announces a June 19 release date for *I'm Gone*, on his own imprint, Big Guitar Music, distributed nationally by Burnside Distribution. *I'm Gone* is Omar's 50th anniversary CD and represents the first Omar & the Howlers release with all new material since his *Boogie Man* album in 2004. Omar and the band will celebrate the release of *I'm Gone* with a special CD release show at Austin's fabled Continental Club on Thursday, June 21 at 10:00 pm. Omar will be joined onstage by special guest Casper Rawls on guitar, as well as many current and former members of the Howlers.

With a recorded history of over 20 titles, this is the first release on Omar's own Big Guitar Music label, with more planned from this still active 21st century bluesman. The Howlers include Wes Starr on drums and Bruce Jones on bass, who have been playing with Omar since his *Big Leg Beat* album in 1980 and are still playing with him today, as well as drummer Mike Buck, bassist Ronnie James and guitarists Casper Rawls and Derek O'Brien. Omar says, "I wanted to put out a CD with everything I like on it. It includes rockabilly, country, and blues, which are genres of music that I grew up with." Fans have been waiting eight years for a new Omar & the Howlers CD, and finally, the wait is over. *I'm Gone* delivers everything the fans have been waiting for and more!

"All of those amazing musicians recorded all 12 tracks in 2 days, with vocals and basic rhythm section parts all recorded simultaneously. A couple of tracks they did in only one take," recalls Omar about the sessions. "Both days were recorded at Wire Recording, the legendary studio on South Lamar in Austin that lost its lease and had to move after being there a very long time, and having recorded some of the most famous artists in Austin in that building."

Omar was the last artist to record at the South Lamar location. The over-dubbing, mixing, and additional instruments were added at Wire's new location. Because all of these

players have known each other for so long and played on so many gigs and recording sessions together, it's worth noting that there were no rehearsals prior to recording. Musicians just listened to the songs that Omar recorded on a CD and showed up at the studio to record.

The result is a recording of endless grooves, as Omar and the band take a tour of virtually all of his musical influences, including rockabilly, country, rock 'n' roll and blues forms ranging from Texas and Chicago styles to Memphis and Delta rhythms. *I'm Gone* contains 11 original tracks exemplifying Omar's diverse talent and musical roots, plus "I'm Mad Again" by John Lee Hooker, which Omar often plays at live shows.

After recording two CDs with Jimmie Vaughan in collaboration with many other amazingly talented friends, Omar was ready for a new Howlers project. "I absolutely loved doing *On the Jimmy Reed Highway* and *Big Town Playboy* as a solo artist with my friends. I was also ready to work on a new Howlers record. This is my 50th year of playing music, so I just did what I wanted to do. There's a little bit of everything I like on here," says Omar. "I like to call it my Americana CD. From rockabilly to a ballad, and from country to blues, it's all over the place."

This quote from the album's liner notes about Omar's formative years in McComb, Mississippi, perfectly captures the spirit and essence of the music it contains: "He snuck out at night after his parents went to sleep, walking through the darkness and across highway 98 into Bear Town where the black community lived. It was there Omar learned how to play the blues. It was there Omar became extraordinary. The lessons Omar learned in Bear Town laid the foundation for a life-long love affair with the blues...."

For more information, visit www.omarandthehowlers.com.